रुपए है। वर्ष 1997-98 के लिए औसत मासिक घाटा 487.30 लाख रुपए है।

Monitoring of rescue work at Malpa

1247. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have constituted any highly empowered Committee to keep vigil on the rescue work provcided to the victims at Malpa of Pithoragarh district and its adioining areas in U.P.; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the details of the action taken by Government against the officials, if found responsible for mis-utilization of rescue work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) No High Powered Committee has been constituted by the Government of India in this regard. The Government of Uttar Pradesh has, however, reportedly conducted a Magisterial enquiry regarding number of people dead, injured and missing due to landslides in Malpa village of Pithoragarh district. The State Government has reportedly paid relief assistance to the affected persons and payment of relief assistance is continuing.

According to the State Government, no official was found guilty.

Strategy to counter price rise of Agricultural Products

1248. SHRI KHAGEN DAS:
SHRI E. BALANANDAN:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state

(a) whether country is suffering due to continued difference of opinion between crucial Ministries in evolving a proper strategy to counter the present price rise in the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that while the Minister of Commerce is opposed to stop export of onion and other agricultural products in one hand and on the other, the Minister of Agriculture is protesting against the decision to bring onion and other agricultural products under OGL; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that both these two Ministers are saying that the policy would hurt the interest of the Indian farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (c) No, sir. The export and import policies in respect of onion and other agricultural commodities are formulated, keeping in view the nation's food security, maximising farm incomes and increasing foreign exchange earnings. The domestic availability and prevailing prices of these commodities in the domestic market dictate the continued export or the need to import a given commodity. The continued shortage of onion in the country has necessitated the banni of the exports of onion till 1st January, 1999. Imports of onion, the other hand, have been placed under OGL through a notifiction issued by DGFT on 15th October, 1998 with a view to augment its availability in the country.

Development of terminator seed

1249. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of a proposal for developing a Terminator seed for the development of plant varieties into which disease and pest resistant genes are injected rather than using pesticides, put forward by the global food giant Monsanto in collaboration